



North Carolina General Assembly
House of Representatives
State Legislative Office Building
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 503
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603-5925

REPRESENTATIVE LOUIS M. PATE, JR.
11TH DISTRICT

TELEPHONE: (919) 733-5755
(919) 715-5815 FAX

EMAIL: louisjp@ncleg.net

HOME ADDRESS: POST OFFICE BOX 945
MOUNT OLIVE, NC 28365

COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE
APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
EDUCATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON K-12
LOCAL GOVERNMENT I
MILITARY, VETERANS, AND INDIAN
AFFAIRS, CHAIR

November 27, 2006

Chairman Kevin Martin
445 12th Street SW
Room #8B-201
Washington, DC 20544

Dear Chairman Martin,

North Carolina has taken major steps in gaining rural internet access across our state. As effective as our initiative has been, we are still lacking. According to a recent study conducted by the e-NC Authority (formerly the North Carolina Rural Internet Authority), 21% of responding municipalities have no Internet connection. Of those municipalities with 1000 people or less, over 40% have no Internet connection. The authority concluded that wireless "may be the only choice of service for some areas of North Carolina."

It is critical that individuals, small businesses and education systems have affordable and safe internet access. The proposed opportunity to provide free and family friendly wireless internet access is a monumental step which can be taken to close the digital divide. Small businesses will find more opportunity for growth and advancement while our education systems will be provided with the same opportunities we see in other areas. This solution also provides filters needed to ensure only safe and proper information is brought to our computers.

We need you to support this opportunity to offer free wireless broadband internet access to our citizens so that we might achieve the benefits of the Internet in all aspects of society.

Sincerely,

Representative Louis M. Pate, Jr.



CC: Commissioner Copps*
Commissioner Adelstein*
Commissioner Tate*
Commissioner McDowell*
FCC Secretary Marlene Dortch*
Kathy Seidel, Acting Chief, Wireless Bureau
U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole
U.S. Senator Richard Burr
U.S. Representative Bob Etheridge